

Notes of the EXARC meeting in Riga & Cesis, June 6 - 9, 2002
as remembered by Marlise Wunderli & Roeland Paardekooper.
See for the addresses of the EXARC members, the address list on the website

Present:

Apals, Janis (Lv); Johansson, Tomas (S); Paardekooper, Roeland (NL); Schöbel, Gunter (D); Vilka, Anda (Lv); Wunderli, Marlise (CH)

Not Present (with notification): Banghard, Karl (D); Boonstra, Anneke (NL); Hein, Wulf (D); Pajusi, Arwo (S); Peise, Fabian (D); Poroszlai, Ildikó (H); Schmidt, Martin (D); Strassmeir, Andreas (D); Walter, Peter (D); Wellin, Lars (S)

Agenda:

1. Opening
2. Information
3. Other Clubs
4. Quality - Education
5. Other EXARC activities
6. Technical details
7. School - project

Part 1: June 6th 2002

1. Opening

Tomas thanks through Anda and Janis all of the Latvian crew for the organisation of this meeting and the conference around it.

This EXARC meeting will be presided by Tomas, Roeland will act as secretary.

2. Information

Culture 2000

Tomas: the administration of the Culture 2000 program, where we applied with the Roar project is in hands of Greece. Most of the funding went to Greek projects as well. Some things are definitely not done correctly, as officials in Brussels tell us. It is, however, vague what to do next about our application. Officially we got the news in November and we could apply again, but first we need to know what our chances are and how to deal with all this. Tomas promises to keep us informed as there are many members interested in this subject.

Interreg

Culture 2000 is a relative small pot of money. Under Interreg, Tomas helped the project "Destination Viking" on its way in January. 16 Projects in different countries joined it, among others Foteviken in Sweden. It is about marketing Viking places. The first part, 1/3rd of the total amount of 6 million Euro seems to have been approved by Brussels. Interreg is to make countries cooperate, Brussels pays half of the total budget. Interreg is too heavy and too difficult? No, you need about 7 partners.

3. Other Clubs

The Fansa Club

For outsiders it might be difficult which club to join, there are so many..

The club around the Oldenburgener Professor Fansa has both advantages and disadvantages. There are clear jobs with tangible results: the conference has to be organised every year and the proceedings of those have to be published as well. At least four people on the list of those invited to found this club are as well members of the EXARC workgroup.

But on the other hand, the "Fansa-Club" is very German oriented and would in this way have only a very limited scope. They should put the English language at the first place if they really want to reach the total public of Europe. Besides that, the question to whether they will use internet to its advantage remains open as well. Quality seems not to be such an important issue

The "Fansa-Club" is actually the old group from the Germany of the 80's. Professor Fansa needs some successor. Is the club the instrument for this?

EAA

Gunter mentions talks he had with people from the EAA (European Association of Archaeologists - www.e-a-a.org). They might be interesting for us. Roeland and Martin will organise a session on experimental archaeology at the EAA convention on Cracow in September 2004.

Tomas reacts with two things. First, the issue of quality must be the one we are focussed at. Next: archaeology can be easily misused, but fortunately chauvinistic ingredients are not that strong anymore. The idea of the European Union is to cross borders and keep friends that way.

Archaeological Interpretation Network (AIN)

The AIN, under Erwin Keefer in the Federseemuseum in Southern Germany (www.federseemuseum.de) started its conventions in April 2001. Last April was the second meeting in Hjemsted, Denmark. They are very interested in the 'quality' issue and have formed three workgroups: "Romans", "exhibitions" and finally "archaeotechnique and museum education". It seems like the AIN with its 25 persons who are member is closely related to the Federseemuseum and its future. Our EXARC seems to have a much wider scope and seems to be supported much wider through Europe as well. The AIN is informed about our activities (Hjemsted is member of both clubs) but we know little of theirs.

Part 2: June 7th 2002

4. Quality - Education

Tomas: How to reach quality? By setting up an education at university level. We should be compiling knowledge with both a theoretical as a practical part. Organising such a thing is one, but accreditation (quality) is the second step. EXARC would need such a project to live. A possibility would be to have such a "EXARC-university-Chair" in a Baltic state. The reasons are obvious: a very rich culture with many remains, good connections to both the east and the west, things like this are still possible to organise here, in contrast to countries like for example Germany and Sweden (too established), there is room, there are still connections to more traditional techniques.

In Sweden one can study archaeology in nine places, but all have problems in attracting fresh students. The EU would be very interested in the concept of training centres, maybe a group of them spread over Europe, maybe a connection to knowledge centres as well. We could train people for replicating things, both to showcase museums as to open air centres.

Gunter: this would be following a methodology centred on open air museums, but (*Marlise* agrees) we should not exclude showcase museums, that is education as well.

Tomas: The problem for us is how we define ourselves. Are we archaeologists in the traditional meaning of it? Or do we do something different? But we are not close to, say, theatre either.

In the centre is experimental archaeology. Through the component technique we are connected to archaeology, but as well to, for example, re-enactment.

Marlise: *Tomas*' idea is much about networking, offering education, but you definitely need a centre, a focal point. A network also has a social component. Riga has more advantages than for example Lejre in setting up such a education. We should as well see the link between humanitarian studies and others.

Tomas: we should try to have some of those politicians visit our centres.

Gunter: 6 million visitors Europe-wide is not much, considering: Germany counts 5,800 museums who had in 2000 about 96 million visitors. All European Theme Parks in 1999 had a total of 180 million visitors..

By the way, the Greek have launched another project near mount Olympos, called 'Mythos'.

Marlise: Experimental archaeology is no 'experience archaeology' (Erlebnisarchäologie), for example with public.

Tomas: one of the outcomes would be, that some money provided by the students will remain in the place where this school would be. The question is what can be invested from the local side, facilities and infrastructure. The total costs might as well be about € 500,000. Half of this money concerns the infrastructure.

Marlise: we should not just remain with experimental archaeology in the academic meaning, but have to see it in its context. For example, where will these students after finishing their time get a job?

5. Other EXARC Activities

Do we need more platforms for the activities of EXARC? We have to see how to join extremes like Latvia and Spain, Greece and Sweden. What do we have in common? Bronze Age?

What about Stone Age, water, fishing? Grave fields? Reconstruction of faces? Clothing? Surely education is a good one. Food / nourishment?

We decide on the phrase: "expressions of prehistory". We have to try to make archaeology more alive and see how to enhance the windows for the public. We have to present things better. We have to do that better than re enactment groups and for example studios. Including in our specialists we have to have the art world. Expression is interpretation including telling the story. People have to take things personally reflecting it upon their own lives. From excavation to interpretation, one needs the artist as well.

We have to see the processes of research and falsification, not the getting independent of these processes. We make the dialogue. We have to make clear how important it is for the field of archaeology to keep all specialists: we should not refrain from using palaeo botanists, soil specialists, textile specialists, use wear analysts et cetera, we have to include them in our schools, have the base of science.

6. Technical Details

Roeland: we are a talking group, but what about tangible results? For example, after two years we still do not have any statutes. How do we make clear it / we are worth working with? What about those people / institutes interested in EXARC, which we kept until now outside? Is it fair to keep them apart when some members of the workgroup do not do that much either, due to different reasons?

We make a selection by raising a contribution fee for the period until December 31st, 2003. This sum will be € 50,00. Eastern European members pay € 15,00. Workgroup members pay nothing, but those not present in Riga / Cesis will be asked to write a note to the secretary.

Institutes on the address list of the External News Mail will receive an invitation to send their contribution fee to our account in Sweden (Lars will open one). After December this year, non-paying members will be removed, or better said: there will probably be no external news mail anymore.

If some stranger (Institute) wants to become member, he needs to get supported by two existing members and apply for membership to the board.

Tomas will take care of simple statutes, in Sweden, registration of an association will not cost anything.

Part 3: June 9th 2002

7. School-project

The rest of the EXARC-members with Tomas, Gunter, Roeland and Marlise met on Sunday June 9th to discuss about the "School-project" and give contributions to a draft.

Different names are proposed: Knowledge-Centre, Archaeological Centre and as a favourite: EAAC European Archaeological Action Centre. Later was suggested as well: European Time centre

What will be the curriculum in this centre?

Technology: Prehistoric techniques, making replicas or didactic material

Research: Experiments in archaeological techniques

Education: Education in archaeological museums and open-air museums (Museumspädagogik),

Pedagogical knowledge (how to teach staff), re-enactment

Interpretation: Presentation of scientific results based on museological criterions

Marketing: Visitor relation, advertisement, service.

Who will be appealed by this centre?

- Museum staff
- Students of Prehistory
- laymen (for example: living history)
- (archaeo-) technicians / craftsmen interested in archaeology

Duration: Base course with 2 semesters, additional semesters if required, summer courses.

On discussion is the placement of the EAAC in Latvia. This would be an input for Latvian archaeology, which was destroyed after the II World War. The area is rich in archaeological evidence. An infrastructure is realistic and the costs for it would be reasonable. Latvia is easy to access by different transport systems.

Our next meeting: November 22nd - 23rd 2002, in Unteruhldingen, Germany.

During these days we will meet while in the same time, there will be a conference planned on "archaeology and interpretation". It might be possible however, that the EXARC members' meeting will be pushed to the day before or after.